

Washington D.C. – Congressman Tim Ryan (D-Niles), Congressman Ralph Regula (R-Medina) and Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) sent a joint letter to Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao late Monday on behalf of Canal Fulton-based FormTech Industries employees who recently lost their jobs as a result of increased imports of foreign products. The letter urged the Secretary to reexamine the circumstances of job loss, reverse the ruling of Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and grant them full eligibility for alternative trade adjustment assistance (ATAA) benefits.

“It is vital that these workers be eligible for AATA benefits so that they may get the training and job placement assistance they need to be successful and move Ohio’s economy into the 21st century,” said Congressman Ryan.

"There is nothing more disheartening than losing a job. Assistance rejected by the Department of Labor just adds insult to injury. Financial assistance and training programs are made to help workers have a soft landing and get them a decent job as soon as possible. It is imperative that we support Ohio workers while we work to revamp U.S. trade policy," Senator Brown said.

"Families in Northeast Ohio have been hit particularly hard by the job loss resulting from foreign imports. The displaced workers at FormTech deserve the financial and job training benefits the ATAA program offers to help them get back on their feet," said Regula.

The TAA program is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The program extends benefits including training for employment in another job or career, income support, job search allowance, and relocation allowances. Qualified workers may quickly return to employment through a combination of these services. The text of the letter follows.

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The Honorable Elaine Chao

Secretary of Labor

200 Constitution Ave, NW

Washington, DC 20210

June 25, 2007

Re: Employment and Training Administration case number 61281

Dear Secretary Chao:

We strongly support providing the former employees of FormTech Industries, LLC (Form Tech) of Canal Fulton, Ohio alternative trade adjustment assistance (ATAA), as outlined in the amended Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) of 1974. Accordingly, we support the appeal submitted by Jim Stanton on June 15, 2007, Financial Secretary of UAW Local 1112, Warren, Ohio on behalf of the FormTech workers to reverse the ruling of Employment and Training Administration (ETA) case number 61281.

The current case ruling finds that the demand for FormTech products was not replaced by directly-competitive imports, and thus FormTech workers do not qualify for ATAA eligibility. However, we are confident that if the case is reexamined and all the facts properly considered, the Department of Labor will find that the loss of the FormTech workers' jobs was a direct result of an increase in directly-competitive imports.

Getrag USA, the principle customer of FormTech, replaced its demand for machine parts with imports manufactured by Samick THK Company Limited, a South Korean firm. The change in Getrag's supply contract from FormTech, a domestic supplier, to Samick, an import supplier, was the sole reason the FormTech workers were separated. Accordingly, these workers should be eligible for ATAA benefits, as the loss of their jobs was a direct result of an increase in directly-competitive, imported machine parts.

We encourage the Department of Labor to grant the appeal filed on behalf of the FormTech workers. If an appeal cannot be granted, we encourage the Department of Labor to reexamine the circumstances of these workers by opening a new ETA case. We support the FormTech Workers and their full eligibility for ATAA benefits.

Thank you for your swift attention to this matter, and we look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Tim Ryan

Member of Congress